



## **Protecting Yourself from Mosquitoes**

You can expect to have to cope with more mosquitoes with because of the rain and flooding in our area. The Douglas County Health Department suggests using an insect repellent to help reduce your exposure to mosquito bites that may carry West Nile virus or other diseases.

Remember – most mosquitoes do not carry West Nile virus and most people who are infected do not become seriously ill. Still, even nuisance mosquitoes can take much of the fun out of the best of times. An effective repellent will help protect you from bites and allow you to better enjoy your time outdoors.

It only takes one bite to get West Nile virus, so you should use mosquito repellent even if you are going outside only for a few minutes. Make sure to pay special attention if you go outdoors between dusk and dawn, because that is when many of the mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus are active.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the use of products with active ingredients that have been registered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for repellent use on skin and clothing. That means the product works well for its intended purpose, and will have little or no adverse reaction when used as directed.

Two ingredients, DEET and Picaridin, have shown through scientific testing to be more effective and provide longer-lasting protection than other products. Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus, or PMD, and IR3535, are ingredients that typically provide reasonably long-lasting protection. You may get even better protection by applying permethrin to your clothing ahead of time. Never apply permethrin to your skin.

For your safety, please remember these basic rules: always follow the instructions on the product label; apply repellents only to the exposed skin and/or clothing; never use repellents under clothing; call your health provider if you have questions.

In addition to using repellent, be sure to get rid of any standing water on your property, including any water in pet dishes, bird baths, eaves, tires and even puddles. Also, wear loose, long-sleeved shirts, plus pants, shoes and socks when outdoors.

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